

NOTE FOR FINANCE COMMITTEE

Special Meetings of the Finance Committee to Examine the Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08 from 19 to 22 March 2007

INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Rule 67 of Rules of Procedure of the Legislative Council (LegCo) of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, the Financial Secretary will present the Estimates of Expenditure 2007-08 to the LegCo on **28 February 2007** when the Appropriation Bill 2007 is introduced into LegCo. The Administration will provide Members of Finance Committee (FC) with copies of the Estimates on the same day. The President will refer the Estimates to the FC for examination in special meetings before consideration of the Appropriation Bill in the Committee of the whole Council in accordance with Rule 71(11). **The purpose of the examination is to ensure that the Administration is seeking a provision no more than is necessary for the execution of the policy concerned.**

THE SPECIAL MEETINGS

Encl. 2. With the concurrence of the Chairman, the FC will hold 20 sessions of special meetings over a period of four days from **19 to 22 March 2007**. The programme for the special meetings is enclosed. The time slots for individual policy areas have reflected the experience of the special meetings in 2006.

3. Directors of Bureaux will attend the meetings with their key Controlling Officers. With the exception of the Controlling Officers in Session 7, each Director of Bureau or, in the absence of a Director of Bureau, the Controlling Officer concerned will make a brief presentation of not more than five minutes at the beginning to highlight the policies in his policy areas, priorities for the year ahead and the requested resources. The Chairman will then invite Members to ask questions on points directly related to the Estimates and to follow up on the replies to Members' initial written questions. The Administration will aim to provide the main points of replies at the meeting, and provide supplementary information in writing after the meetings, if necessary.

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INITIAL WRITTEN QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

4. Members may raise questions before the special meetings for written reply by Controlling Officers, through their respective Director of Bureau as appropriate. The Administration will reply as expeditiously as possible.

5. Given time and resource constraints, the Administration will give priority to the *first 1 200* questions received from the Clerk to FC (FC Clerk), with the aim of providing written replies to Members at least two working days before the relevant sessions of the special meetings. The Administration will continue to try its best to provide a reply to subsequent questions delivered by the FC Clerk as soon as it can and, where possible, before the relevant sessions of the special meetings.

6. For questions which are not directly related to the Estimates, the Administration will only reply to Members by letter *after* the special meetings. The Administration may decline a reply or provide a partial reply if the benefit of having the information is disproportionate to the effort required to obtain it.

7. To be more environmental-friendly and help reduce the use of paper, the Administration suggests to provide replies to Members' questions by electronic means through the LegCo website. Hard copy of replies will only be provided to those Members who specifically request it.

SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS

8. As far as possible, Directors of Bureaux or Controlling Officers will respond to verbal or written supplementary questions arising from the special meetings *before* resumption of the debate on the Appropriation Bill.

FORMAT AND DEADLINE FOR WRITTEN QUESTIONS

9. The format and deadline for Members to put forward their written questions and other logistical details about the special meetings will be promulgated by the FC Clerk separately.

**Programme of Special Meetings of the Finance Committee
to Examine the Estimates 2007-08
from 19 to 22 March 2007**

Date	Time	Session No.	Leading Director of Bureau (if applicable)	Subject
19 March 2007 (Monday)	45 mins. (9:00 a.m. - 9:45 a.m.)	1	Secretary for the Civil Service	Civil Service [CSB]
	1 hr. 30 mins. (9:50 a.m. - 11:20 a.m.)	2	Secretary for Security	Security [SB]
	45 mins. (11:25 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.)	3	Secretary for Financial Services and the Treasury	Financial Services [FSTB(FS)]
	45 mins. (12:15 p.m. - 1:00 p.m.)	4		Public Finance [FSTB(Tsy)]
	45 mins. (2:15 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.)	5	Secretary for Commerce, Industry and Technology	Communications and Technology [CITB(CT)]
	1 hr. (3:05 p.m. - 4:05 p.m.)	6		Commerce and Industry [CITB(CI)]
	1 hr. (4:15 p.m. - 5:15 p.m.)	7		Miscellaneous including – Administration Wing [CSO] Audit Commission [AUD] Chief Executive’s Office [CEO] Independent Commission Against Corruption [ICAC] LegCo Commission [LC] The Ombudsman [OMB]

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Date	Time	Session No.	Leading Director of Bureau	Subject
20 March 2007 (Tuesday)	1 hr. 45 mins. (2:15 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.)	8	Secretary for Home Affairs	Home Affairs [HAB]
	45 mins. (4:10 p.m. - 4:55 p.m.)	9	Secretary for Constitutional Affairs	Constitutional Affairs [CAB]
	1 hr.15 mins. (5:00 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.)	10	Secretary for Education and Manpower	Education and Manpower [EMB]

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Date	Time	Session No.	Leading Director of Bureau	Subject
21 March 2007 (Wednesday)	1 hr. 15 mins. (9:00 a.m. - 10:15 a.m.)	11	Secretary for Economic Development and Labour	Economic Development [EDLB(ED)]
	1 hr. (10:20 a.m. – 11:20 a.m.)	12		Labour [EDLB(L)]
	45 mins. (11:25 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.)	13	Secretary for Housing, Planning and Lands	Housing [HPLB(H)]
	1 hr. (12:15 p.m. - 1:15 p.m.)	14		Planning and Lands [HPLB(PL)]
	1 hr. 15 mins. (2:15 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.)	15	Secretary for Health, Welfare and Food	Food Safety and Environmental Hygiene [HWFB(FE)]
	1 hr. 15 mins. (3:40 p.m. - 4:55 p.m.)	16		(i) Health [HWFB(H)]
	1 hr. 15 mins (5:00 p.m.- 6:15 p.m.)			(ii) Welfare and Women [HWFB(WW)]

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Date	Time	Session No.	Leading Director of Bureau (if applicable)	Subject
22 March 2007 (Thursday)	1 hr. 15 mins. (2:00 p.m. - 3:15 p.m.)	17	Judiciary Administrator Secretary for Justice	(i) Administration of Justice [JA] (ii) Legal Administration [SJ]
	45 mins. (3:25 p.m. - 4:10 p.m.)	18	Secretary for the Environment, Transport and Works	Works [ETWB(W)]
	1 hr. 15 mins. (4:15 p.m. - 5:30 p.m.)	19		Environment [ETWB(E)]
	1 hr. (5:35 p.m. - 6:35 p.m.)	20		Transport [ETWB(T)]

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Words in brackets [] indicate the prefix of the “reply serial number” to be quoted on the reply form of respective sessions.